

Purpose of this Report

In 2001, the Indiana General Assembly enacted House Bill 1971 (Public Law 231-2001). This legislation requires, among other things, that the Department of Education pilot a four (4) year graduation rate formula, compare that calculation with the calculation enumerated in 511 IAC 6.1-1-2 (referred to as a survival graduation rate), and report out the findings of the study to the State Board of Education and Legislative Services agency on or before December 1, 2006.

As a matter of reference, it should be noted that although the provisions of 511 IAC 6-1.1-1-2 remain in rule, Public Law 81-2003 modified the graduation rate calculation. The 2003 law essentially replicates, for the most part, the requirements of Public Law 231-2001, the requirement for a pilot graduation rate calculation. However, PL 81-2003 did not repeal or remove the requirements for the Department to conduct a pilot graduation rate calculation. Accordingly, the two laws run in concert with each other.

The calculation and definitions enumerated under 511 IAC 6-1.1-1-2 are as follows:

DROPOUT: A student who was enrolled in school during the current school year or the previous summer recess; left the educational system during the current school year or the previous summer recess; has not graduated from high school; and does not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions:

- A) Death.
- B) Temporary absence due to suspension or a school excused absence.
- C) Transfer to a public or nonpublic school.

DROPOUT RATE: Means the number determined under Step Three of the following formula:

- Step One: Determine the number of students enrolled on October 1 or a date closest to October 1 that school is in session;
- Step Two: Determine the number of students who drop out of school during the current school year and the previous summer recess;
- Step Three: Determine the quotient of:
 - (A) the amount under Step Two; divided by
 - (B) the amount determined under Step One.

GRADUATION RATE: For the class of students who graduate prior to the 2005-2006 school year, means the number determined under Step Three of the following formula:

- Step One: Determine the dropout rates for grades 9, 10, 11, and 12;
- Step Two: Determine the remainder of :
 - (A) 1.0; minus
 - (B) The amount determined under Step One for each of the above four (4) grades.
- Step Three: Determine the product of the four (4) amounts determined under Step Two.

In comparison, the 2001 graduation rate pilot law provides the following definitions:

COHORT: A class of students within a high school who have the same expected graduation year.

DROPOUT: A student, who is at least 16 but less than 18, who has had an exit interview for which the student provides written acknowledgement of withdrawal and parents and principal provide written consent for the student to withdraw from school is a dropout.

A dropout is a student for whom there is no record that can be found of:

1. A transfer to another public or nonpublic school;
2. Removal by the students parents to provide instruction equivalent to that given in the public school (home school);
3. A withdrawal because of a long term medical condition or death;
4. Detention by a law enforcement agency or the Department of Corrections;
5. Placement by court order or the Division of Family and Children; or,
6. Enrollment in a virtual school.

EXPECTED GRADUATION YEAR: The year beginning three (3) years after the reporting year that the student is first considered to have entered grade nine (9).

GRADUATION: The student has successfully completed:

1. Sufficient academic credits or equivalent academic credits; and,
2. The graduation qualifying examination (GQE) or waiver process required under law that results in awarding a high school diploma or academic honors diploma.

Graduation does not include the issuance of the GED

REPORTING YEAR: October 1 through September 30 (permits summer school graduation)

RETENTION: Reclassification by a school corporation of a student that puts the students in a cohort that has an expected graduation year after the expected graduation year of the student's initial cohort.

Calculation of the Pilot Graduation Rate

The law required the department to calculate the current graduation rate (shown above) and the pilot graduation rate for each school building and school corporation participating in the pilot.

For each individual school building:

- a. Determine the 9th grade enrollment for 2002-2003;
- b. Add the number of students enrolled after the enrollment date and that have the same expected graduation year;
- c. Add the number of retained students from earlier cohorts who became members of the cohort for whom the graduation rate is being calculated;
- d. Add the number of students who began the reporting year in the cohort that expects to graduate during a future reporting period and graduate during the current reporting year;
- e. Subtract the number of students who have left the cohort for:
 - a. Transfer to another public or nonpublic school;
 - b. Removed by the student's parents to provide instruction equivalent to that given in a public school (home school);
 - c. Withdrawal because of long term medical condition or death;
 - d. Detention by law enforcement agency or the department of corrections;
 - e. Placement by a court order or the Division of Family and Children;
 - f. Enrollment in a virtual school;
 - g. Graduate before the beginning of the reporting year.
- f. Determine the total number of students who have graduated during the current reporting year;
- g. Divide the total remaining cohort students by the number of students who have graduated;

For each school corporation, divide the results from Step e above by the results from step f above.

The 2001 law requires the department to conduct a pilot program concerning the determination of graduation rates. It requires the department to select ten (10) school corporations that represent:

- (1) different geographical areas of the state; and
- (2) urban, suburban, and rural populations; to participate in the program.

The following school corporations served as pilots for this project: South Dearborn School Corporation, New Albany-Floyd School Corporation, Lake Central School Corporation, M.S.D. of Perry Township, M.S.D of Washington Township, Rockville Community School Corporation, Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation, North Spencer County School Corporation, Richmond Community Schools, Southern Wells Community Schools.

Pilot school corporations/high schools were required to:

- (2) Establish a student test number for all 9th grade enrollees for the 2002-2003 school year.
- (3) Report 9th grade enrollment by student test number.
- (4) Establish and maintain records as to who was not a dropout. (This required paying closer attention to students that leave the cohort in order to count them as something other than a dropout).
- (5) Provide to the Department in some form the number of students that:
 - a. Enrolled after the October 1 enrollment date who become members of the current cohort;
 - b. Enumeration of students that left school legally, by reason for leaving.
 - c. Individual students who are retained from a previous cohort.
 - d. Number of students receiving the General Educational Development Diploma (GED).
 - e. Number of students completing a secondary adult education program.

The Data

As noted earlier, the 2003 General Assembly modified the methodology for calculation of the graduation rate. The Department of Education is currently reviewing all data submissions relative to the graduation rate calculation. Accordingly, the following information is subject to change as data edits are finalized. These data are current as of November 27, 2006.

Preliminary calculation of the graduation rate under 511 IAC 6.1-1-2 for pilot school buildings is as follows

1179	South Dearborn High School	88.0%
1925	New Albany Senior High School	91.2%
1930	Floyd Central High School	93.6%
3833	Lake Central High School	92.3%
5307	Perry Meridian High School	96.9%
5309	Southport High School	96.1%
5451	North Central High School	94.8%
6637	Rockville Jr.-Sr. High School	92.9%
7353	Penn High School	96.4%
7759	Heritage Hills High School	94.2%
8993	Richmond High School	71.0%
9058	Southern Wells Jr.-Sr. High School	94.5%

The preliminary calculated school building graduation rate per the provisions of HB 1971 are as follows:

1179	South Dearborn High School	73.0%
1925	New Albany Senior High School	60.5%
1930	Floyd Central High School	86.1%
3833	Lake Central High School	82.3%
5307	Perry Meridian High School	68.9%
5309	Southport High School	73.2%
5451	North Central High School	77.1%
6637	Rockville Jr.-Sr. High School	81.3%
7353	Penn High School	83.0%
7759	Heritage Hills High School	79.0%
8993	Richmond High School	51.1%
9058	Southern Wells Jr.-Sr. High School	77.9%

A comparison of the two calculations for the ten school buildings is reflected below.

		511 IAC 6.1-1-2 Calculated Graduation Rate	Pilot Calculated Graduation Rate	Difference
1179	South Dearborn High School	88.0%	73.0%	-15.0%
1925	New Albany High School	91.2%	60.5%	-30.6%
1930	Floyd Central High School	93.6%	86.1%	-7.5%
3833	Lake Central High School	92.3%	82.3%	-10.1%
5307	Perry Meridian High School	96.9%	68.9%	-28.1%
5309	Southport High School	96.1%	73.2%	-22.9%
5451	North Central High School	94.8%	77.1%	-17.7%
6637	Rockville Jr-Sr High School	92.9%	81.3%	-11.7%
7353	Penn High School (P-H-M)	96.4%	83.0%	-13.5%
7759	Heritage Hills High School	94.2%	79.0%	-15.1%
8993	Richmond High School	71.0%	51.1%	-19.8%
9058	Southern Wells Jr-Sr. High School	94.5%	77.9%	-16.5%

The required school corporation graduation rate comparison follows. It should be noted that two school corporations included more than one high school. These were NewAlbany-Floyd School Corporation (New Albany High School and Floyd Central High School) and the MSD of Perry Township (Perry Meridian High School and Southport High School). The corporation rate for all other school corporations is the same as the individual high school graduation rate. To reiterate, all data are preliminary and subject to change.

		511 IAC 6.1-1-2 Calculated Graduation Rate	Pilot Calculated Graduation Rate	Difference
1600	South Dearborn High School	88.0%	73.0%	-15.0%
1925	New Albany-Floyd County Consolidated Schools	92.4%	71.1%	-21.3%
4615	Lake Central School Corporation	92.3%	82.3%	-10.1%
5340	MSD Perry Township	96.5%	71.0%	-25.5%
5370	MSD Washington Township	94.8%	77.1%	-17.7%
6300	Rockville Community School Corporation	92.9%	81.3%	-11.7%
7175	Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation	96.4%	83.0%	-13.4%
7385	North Spencer County School Corporation	94.2%	79.0%	-15.1%
8385	Richmond Community Schools	71.0%	51.1%	-19.8%
8425	Southern Wells Community Schools	94.5%	77.9%	-16.5%

Analysis

In all cases, based on preliminary data, the calculation of the graduation rate per 511 IAC 6.1-1-2 exceeded the calculation of the graduation rate under the pilot calculation, based on preliminary data. This applies to both individual school buildings and for school corporations. The spread in difference between the calculated rates for individual school buildings ranged from 30.6 percent for New Albany High School to a difference of 7.5 percent for Floyd Central High School. The arithmetic average difference for the 12 school buildings was 17.4 percent. On a school corporation basis, the range of difference between the pilot calculation and the 511 IAC 6.1-1-2 calculation was 25.5% for MSD Perry Township to the smallest difference of 10.1 percent for Lake Central School Corporation. The arithmetic average difference for the 10 school corporations was 16.6 percent.

